

# ***San Geronio***

## ***Search and Rescue Team***



## **Prospective Team Member Information**

October 2000

# ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

## ***Team History***

San Gorgonio Search and Rescue Team was formed after a tragic incident that occurred on Big Falls near Forest Falls over a weekend in February 1958. While picnicking in the area with his parents, a young boy went for a hike in and around the falls. He fell about 50 feet and was seriously injured. His screams for help could be heard over the roar of the water. No one was able to come to his rescue that afternoon. The next day, efforts were made to attempt a rescue of the stricken boy; all were unsuccessful due to inadequate equipment, lack of training and icing of the ropes. As far as anyone knew, the boy was still alive but he would have to spend another night on the falls. Finally, by the next day, a crew of air force rescue personnel were able to reach the boy. Unfortunately, he had frozen to death, found with a 1- to 2-inch layer of ice covering his body.

Sheriff Bland vowed that this sort of event should never happen again. He appointed then Deputy Willard Farquhar of the Yucaipa Sub Station to form a volunteer mountain search and rescue team from the local area residents. The response was so overwhelming that two teams were formed. The San Gorgonio team was made up of residents from Mentone, Yucaipa and Redlands. The second team, Valley of the Falls, was formed a short time later from residents from Forest Falls.

Since this time in 1958 when it all started, the Team has been an all volunteer self supportive team. Training of members is still accomplished by in team trainings and “on the job” training. Vehicles, ropes, climbing equipment, medical supplies, snow and ice equipment and other items are purchased by the Team through group and individual fundraisers with little support from the Sheriffs Office.

Although many of the faces on the Team have changed over the years, there still are members who started with the Team in 1958 and are still active today. There are several active members who are “second generation” sons of original Team members. We anticipate in the near future some “third generation” members will be active. The Team has a professional mission and a feeling of family at the same time.

It is hoped that you too will become a member of this extended family.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Physical and Mental Condition Expectations***

Wilderness Search and Rescue activities can be very strenuous both physically and mentally. In addition to carrying your own personal equipment (up to about 40 pounds in the summer months and over 55 pounds in the winter months) you are expected to carry additional equipment to support the search and rescue operation. This additional equipment includes medical gear, litters, technical rope rescue equipment, ropes and other materials as needed. Typically, if the victim's location is not immediately known, a search will have to be conducted. Hiking in the mountains is considered strenuous enough without the added burden of searching for lost or injured people. Many times the hiking is not on the established trail, thrashing through thick buckthorn or manzanita, or breaking trail in deep snow. Once the victim has been located and readied for transport, if a helicopter is not available for the evacuation, we must carry the victim out in a litter. This can require a large number of rescuers laboring over uneven and narrow trail. Some carry outs can take over eight hours of continuous effort.

This information is real and commonplace in this work. Wilderness search and rescue can be fun and very exciting. There is a serious side to all of this as well. For your own safety, the safety of the other Team members, and the safety of the victim, you must be in good physical shape to endure these hardships. You must also know your limitations—both physical and mental. If a rescuer on a search and rescue mission becomes a victim, this not only jeopardizes the mission but the lives of the fellow Team members and the victim. The success of a mission lies in the hands of each individual Team member. If your physical condition is not able to cope with the potential strains of the mission or if you are not able to bear the mental trauma of sick, dying, and dead people, you need to be able to tell the mission commander so that an appropriate assignment can be made. There is no shame in admitting limitations.

As you can see, appropriate physical and mental condition is essential and lives depend upon it.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Time Commitment and Expectations***

Volunteer search and rescue is just that—volunteer. We don't get paid or even reimbursed for any expenses that we might incur. It is done without any monetary reward, and most of us like it that way. The rewards are much less tangible and differ to each individual member.

Volunteer search and rescue requires a serious time commitment. It is recognized that everyone's time is valuable and, the time and effort spent supporting the Team is greatly appreciated. Each person's time commitment varies. In order to become proficient in search and rescue skills, much more time is required.

The minimum amount of time that must be devoted to the Team and its activities is 18 hours per month to remain active. This is a minimum. There will be months that the 18 hours is accumulated over one day and other months where it may be difficult to meet this level.

One can count on spending a certain amount of time every month. Monthly Team business meetings are four hours; monthly trainings are eight hours. Attendance is mandatory for these two activities. Equipment maintenance either at our facility or for your own personal gear is at least eight hours per month; fundraising and other associated activities will require additional time. Of course, search and/or rescue calls can last anywhere from one hour to several days. One search for a lost boy scout several years ago lasted for two weeks.

After your application packet is complete and accepted by the Station Captain, you will be issued a Team pager. We have a system where all of the pagers can be "toned" at the same time in the event of a mission, or when other information is to be relayed to the Team members. We do have a paging system that is free but the paging area is limited. It is also your responsibility to wear this pager at all times—at work, at home, or when you are just "out and about." It is important that once a Team page is received that you return the call to let the Team know your status. A fast response to calls is essential. Even if you are unable to participate in the mission, you are still responsible for calling in and letting the team know.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Prospective Member Requirements***

All prospective members of the Team must, at a minimum, meet the following requirements. This applies to Citizen Volunteer and Reserve Deputy applicants.

For Citizen Volunteers, the minimum age is 18 years at the time of application. For Reserve Deputy, the minimum age requirement at the time of application is 21 years.

An advisor, who is a member of the Team, will be assigned to the individual to help guide and train the applicant through all that must be dealt with and completed. With this help, the process advances with fewer problems and in a shorter period of time.

Prospective members are expected to complete a one-year probationary period prior to being accepted to the Team. This one year starts once the application for Citizen Volunteer or Reserve Deputy has been accepted by the Sheriff's Department.

Once the application is accepted by the Sheriff's Department, the prospective member shall perform all of the following:

Successfully complete the requirements of SAR Tech III or SAR Tech II (whichever is appropriate) within one year. This requires attendance of the Basic SAR Academy and passing the written and practical examinations. The tests may be challenged by qualified individuals. Arrangements for the academy and testing is through Volunteer Forces.

Attend all monthly business meetings during the probationary period.  
Absences must be excused in advance.

Attend all monthly training sessions during the probationary period.  
Absences must be excused in advance.

Actively participate in all fundraising events during the probationary period.  
Absences must be excused in advance.

Successfully complete the appropriate first aid and CPR certifications.

Actively participate in the majority of search and rescue operations to the extent of the training, expertise and experience of the individual. The prospective member is not expected to perform beyond their level of training and experience.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Equipment Requirements***

Even though some equipment is purchased by the Team for individual use, the prospective member is expected to purchase and maintain a majority of his/her own rescue equipment. This can be costly and time consuming. Items that will need to be obtained by the individual include, but are not limited to, the following (cost figures are estimations, actual cost may vary):

Orange shirt with the appropriate patches	\$25
Camouflage pants	\$25
Hiking boots	\$100-250
Clothing appropriate for the season and situation	\$100-400
Backpack suitable for the equipment and other items to be carried	\$100-500
Personal rope work and rock-climbing equipment	\$50-500
Personal snow- and ice-climbing and travel equipment	\$50-500
Personal survival equipment appropriate to the season and situation	\$50-300
The "Ten Essentials"	\$10-100
All items as required by the SAR Tech II examination	\$100-150

Not all of the above equipment has to be purchased at one time. As a person gains experience and knowledge, equipment selection, especially specialized equipment, can be made.

A Team pager will be issued at the end of the probationary period.

Prospective members must have the appropriate medical and automobile insurance as required by County policy.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Citizen Volunteer Procedure***

The following is a procedural checklist for the Citizen Volunteer applicant to follow and use to track the application process.

1. Attend at least three consecutive Team business meetings
2. Complete the Preliminary Application
3. Successfully pass a background check
4. Successfully pass an oral qualification interview
5. Complete the Citizen Volunteer application packet
  - Copy of drivers license
  - Copy of automobile and medical insurance
  - Copy of Social Security card
  - Fingerprints\*
  - Photo for identification badge\*
  - Complete all paperwork
6. Submit the completed packet to the Deputy Coordinator for the Station Captain signature.
7. Successfully pass a medical examination\*\*

Once the packet has been accepted and signed by the Station Captain, you are officially a Citizen Volunteer for the Sheriff's Department. You are now covered by county insurance and are permitted to ride in county vehicles and participate in training and search and rescue missions (to the extent your training allows).

As a citizen volunteer, you are expected to attend all monthly meetings, training sessions and other activities. You are also expected to attend and successfully complete the Basic Search and Rescue Academy (BSAR) and pass the examination for SAR Tech II or III as appropriate. Successful completion of basic first aid and CPR from a recognized trainer is also mandatory.

\* You will need to arrange for these items with the Team's Deputy Coordinator through the Yucaipa Sheriff Station. Telephone (909) 790-3105.

\*\* You will need to arrange for this with Volunteer Forces. Telephone (909) 387-0686.

# ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

## ***Advisor Program***

In order to help new and prospective members become better members of the Team, the Advisor Program is utilized. The requirements of an advisor are simple. The biggest requirement is that enough time is taken to be available to help and answer questions for the new person. It is expected that all members of the Team will be advisors to prospective members at one time or another. The biggest requirement of the new or prospective member is to use the advisor that is assigned to the fullest extent possible. Communication between the advisor and the prospective member is essential. Activities and guidelines for the advisor include:

1. One Team member will be assigned to the prospective member and will make themselves available to them.
2. The advisor introduces the person to other Team members at meetings, training and other events.
3. The advisor calls the person prior to the meetings, training and other events as a reminder.
4. The advisor helps assemble the proper gear including clothing, boots, pack and other items as needed.
5. The advisor helps assemble the Team uniform shirt with the proper patches and placement of patches.
6. The advisor will meet with the person when needed to go over items of interest. This may include but is not limited to special equipment needs, additional one-on-one training, or whatever may be needed. Be aware that the advisor does not have to teach everything on their own. The expertise of other Team members should be used for assistance in training.
7. The advisor will coordinate with other advisors and assist the person with BSAR and the SAR Tech testing.
8. The advisor will coordinate with other advisors if there are plans for a special “mini-training” or other similar activity so that others may participate.
9. All Team members will observe and report to the advisors on the activities and actions, both positive and negative, of the person.
10. When all of the requirements have been met and the probationary period is complete, the advisor will submit the person to the Team for membership vote. This submittal will include a brief resume of accomplishments and attributes of the person.
11. If the expectations of the Team are not met after working with the person, the advisor will inform the membership committee chairperson and appropriate action will be taken. This should be done prior to the end of the probation period.

## ***SAN GORGONIO SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM***

### ***Active and Inactive Status Requirements***

An active Team member is one that serves a minimum of twelve hours per month and attends the majority of Team functions, including business meetings, training sessions, search and/or rescue missions, and fundraisers.

A Team member would qualify for Inactive Status for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to attend three monthly business meetings in a period of one year without a prior excuse for each absence, or
2. Failure to attend three training sessions in a period of one year without a prior excuse for each absence, or
3. Failure to serve a minimum of twelve hours of service with the Team for six consecutive months.

If the Board of Directors determines that a member has become inactive, written notification will be done. This notification will outline the options of either becoming active, requesting a leave of absence, or resigning. With a leave of absence or resignation, the Team member will be required to turn in all Team owned equipment that may be in their possession including the personal pager.

A Team member will remain on inactive status for one year if no action is taken. The one year time period starts after any of the above occur. At the end of the one year period, the inactive member must become active or resign from the Team. If they do not resign within a reasonable period of time, they will be terminated from the Team by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may make exceptions to this on a case by case basis as needed.

## ***New 24- Hour SAR Pack List***

Provided here is the revised 24- Hour SAR Pack list. SAR Pack veterans will quickly note the significant changes. We still recommend your webbing be at least 20' long. For carabiners, we recommended the pear- shaped style, such as the Petzle "Attaché", for use as personal belay device with the Munter Hitch.

<b><u>Personal First Aid and Survival Kit</u></b>			
		1	Mirror, small
		1	Nylon twine or small rope, 50'
4	Acetaminophen or aspirin tablets	1	Pack, 1800 cubic inch (minimum)
4	Antacid tablets	1	Pad and pencil
2	Antiseptic cleansing pads	2	Prusik slings (suitable for 9mm to 11mm rope) *
1	Antiseptic ointment	1	Rainwear, durable
6	Band aids, various sizes	1	SAR personal identification
1	Candle, long burning	1	Shelter material, 8x10 plastic or coated nylon
2	Cotton swabs, non sterile	1	Scissors, multi-purpose
1	Duct tape, 5' – 10'	1	Socks, extra pair
1	Leaf bag, large	1	Sunscreen lotion
8	Matches in a waterproof container	2	Tea bags
1	Moleskin	1	Tissue paper or baby wipes (recommended)
1	Plastic bag, zip lock, qt. Size, for kit	1	Tracking stick, 42" long
2	Quarters, for phone call	1	Watch
1	Razor blade, single edge safety type	1	Water container, at least liter size
1	Roller gauze Bandage	1	Webbing, 1" tubular-length suitable for harness (20' recommended)
2	Safety pins, large	1	Wire, 5' to 10', woven steel
1	Splinter forceps, tweezers	8	Wire ties, plastic, self-locking
1	Space type Blanket or space type sleeping bag		
1	Towelette, clean		
4	Whistle		

### **Personal SAR Equipment**

4	Bags, various sizes, zip locked
1	Bandanna, handkerchief
1	Cap or other headgear
2	Carabiners (locking)
1	Clothes bag, waterproof
1	Clothing, adequate for climate
1	Clothing, extra set, adequate for climate
1	Compass, orienteering
1	Flagging tape, roll
1	Flashlight or lantern
1	Flashlight, extra, extra batteries and bulb
1	Footwear, sturdy, adequate for climate
1	Gloves, durable, even in summer
1	Goggles, or eye protection, clear
1	Insect repellent
1	Knife, multi-purpose
1	Lip balm, with sunscreen
1	Measuring device, 18 in. minimum
1	Metal cup or pot

### **Optional Personal Support Equipment**

(Not required, but highly recommended)

1	Altimeter
1	Binoculars
1	Protractor
2	Antihistamine, 25mg Benadryl
2	Extra leaf bags
1	Extra water container
1	Foam pad
2	Food, nonperishable
1	Gaiters
1	Rain cover for pack
1	Sterno or stove
1	Sunglasses, 97% UV protection
1	Trail snacks
1	Water purification tabs or filter

\* We recommend the 6mm Purcell Prusiks for emergency use. Get qualified instruction in the use of the Purcell Prusik before entering the high angle environment.